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Regional cooperation

Regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Economic Commission for Europe and Economic Commission for Africa

Summary

The present addendum to the report of the Secretary-General on regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields contains information on resolutions and decisions adopted or endorsed at the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (forty-eighth session of the Economic Commission for Africa), held in Addis Ababa on 30 and 31 March 2015, at the thirtieth session of the Committee of the Whole of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, held in New York on 19 and 20 March 2015, at the sixteenth extraordinary session of the Committee of the Whole of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Santiago on 16 April 2015, and at the sixty-sixth session of the Economic Commission for Europe, held in Geneva from 14 to 16 April 2015.

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I. Matters calling for action by the Council

1. At its thirtieth session, held in New York from 19 to 20 March 2015 the Committee of the Whole of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean approved resolution 692 (PLEN.30), on the basis of which the following draft resolution is submitted for action by the Economic and Social Council.

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

Admission of Norway as a member of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

The Economic and Social Council,

Noting resolution 692 (PLEN.30) of the Committee of the Whole of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean concerning the admission of Norway as a member of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean,

Approves the admission of Norway as a member of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

II. Matters brought to the attention of the Council

A. Economic Commission for Africa

2. The eighth Joint Annual Meetings of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration and the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development was held in Addis Ababa on 30 and 31 March 2015 on the theme "Implementing Agenda 2063: planning, mobilizing and financing for development". The Conference adopted a ministerial statement and approved a number of resolutions relating to the programme of work of the Economic Commission for Africa, summaries of which are set out below for the attention of the Economic and Social Council.

Summary of the ministerial statement

3. The Ministers saluted the fact that Agenda 2063 emerged from consultative processes and declared that it should serve as the vision for the structural transformation of the continent. They committed themselves to tackling poverty and inequality, providing productive employment and decent jobs for young Africans, empowering women and prioritizing the welfare of African children and reiterated their full support for a post-2015 development agenda.

4. The Ministers noted with appreciation the material and financial support provided to Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone by other African countries and the African private sector during the outbreak of the Ebola virus disease, renewed their unequivocal support for the Governments and peoples of those three countries and welcomed the pledges made thus far by the international community to support

them. Further, the Ministers appealed for immediate steps to be taken to restore growth and enable recovery in those countries, including debt cancellation.

5. The Ministers welcomed the intention to split Agenda 2063 into separate 10-year development plans to facilitate its implementation, recognizing that, to a great extent, its successful implementation will depend on strong linkages between the planning, mobilizing and financing of the processes of structural transformation. The Ministers committed themselves to improving planning processes in their countries by, inter alia, strengthening existing pan-African statistical institutions, as well as other similar institutions agreed to by Heads of State and Government, to support the implementation of the first 10-year plan of Agenda 2063.

6. The Ministers endorsed the recommendations set out in the report of the High-level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa and called upon the international community to complement Africa's efforts to track, stop and repatriate illicit financial flows.

7. The Ministers urged African countries, when negotiating trade and investment agreements, to assess the impact of those agreements on industrialization and economic transformation and to emphasize plans and policies that promote regional integration. The Ministers agreed to support the negotiations for the establishment of a continental free-trade area and urged the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank and the Economic Commission for Africa to accelerate the development of the planned Africa Regional Integration Index.

8. The Ministers urged the adoption of science-informed and evidence-based policy, planning and practices to make African development sustainable, more resilient and less vulnerable to the negative impacts of climate variability and change. They strongly encouraged their countries to explore South-South and triangular cooperation in order to leverage the opportunities offered by emerging economic powers, while urging their traditional partners to continue to support their development efforts.

9. The Ministers endorsed the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024 and called for its full and effective implementation. They called upon the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, regional economic communities and all other regional and subregional organizations to provide the necessary support to landlocked African countries through their respective work programmes and in accordance with their respective mandates.

10. The Ministers called upon development partners to provide enhanced and preferential official development assistance to African least developed countries and reiterated the need to institutionalize the review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 and to ensure that African least developed countries are adequately represented in that review. They welcomed the offer of the Government of Italy to host a ministerial meeting on structural transformation and graduation for African least developed countries in June 2015 and requested the Economic Commission for Africa, in collaboration with the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States and other partners, to organize an African regional meeting in preparation for it.

Implementing Agenda 2063: planning, mobilizing and financing for development (resolution 928 (XLVIII))

11. The Conference of Ministers urged the African Union Commission, in the finalization of the first 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063, to (a) further improve on the milestones, targets and strategies contained in the plan; (b) explore synergies and opportunities for the harmonization of the objectives, targets and indicators of Agenda 2063 and those of the post-2015 development agenda; (c) establish robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks; (d) clarify roles and responsibilities and strengthen coordination mechanisms with relevant partners and stakeholders; and (e) remove and avoid imposing specific targets on public expenditure and maintain flexibility in fiscal policy and budget allocations in accordance with national priorities, specific characteristics and levels of development.

12. The Conference, inter alia, called upon the African Union Commission, in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank, the regional economic communities and other stakeholders, to support member States in incorporating Agenda 2063 into their national plans and urged member States, regional economic communities and the African Union Commission, in partnership with the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank and all regional and external stakeholders, to (a) consider the financing of Agenda 2063 in a manner that takes into account, first, domestic resource mobilization; second, the leveraging of existing and new financial intermediation vehicles to be created; and, third, access to finance facilitation resources such as project development funds and guarantee and risk-sharing facilities; (b) address the issues of illicit financial flows, natural resource rent maximization and regional capital market development; and (c) deepen the examination of the strategy for the domestic and external financing of Agenda 2063.

13. The Ministers further called upon the African Union Commission, the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank to organize a multi-stakeholder consultation on the first 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063 by 30 September 2015 and to employ South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation in support of the implementation of Agenda 2063. Additionally, they requested the African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa to establish, by 31 March 2016, an economic development observatory, mandated with setting in place an early warning system for risks to African economies and proposing measures to mitigate their possible consequences.

Third International Conference on Financing for Development (resolution 929 (XLVIII))

14. The Conference of Ministers endorsed the draft document entitled "Financing for development: Africa's perspectives" as a living document, taking into account inputs from the Chair's summary of the proceedings of the regional consultations held in Addis Ababa on 23 and 24 March 2015, and requested the African groups of negotiators in New York to use the draft document as an input in negotiating the outcome document of the third International Conference on Financing for Development.

African Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (resolution 930 (XLVIII))

15. The Conference of Ministers called upon the Economic Commission for Africa, in collaboration with the African Union Commission and other partners, to take all steps necessary to convene on a biennial basis the African Regional Forum on Sustainable Development and encouraged member States to scale up their commitment to and support for that Forum.

Data revolution and statistical development (resolution 931 (XLVIII))

16. The Conference of Ministers endorsed the report of the High-level Conference on the Data Revolution, adopted its recommendations and called upon member States, the African Union Commission, the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank and other development partners to implement it, bringing together diverse data communities and using a wide range of data sources, tools and innovative technologies, with a view to providing timely and disaggregated data for decision-making, service delivery, citizen engagement and information to drive Africa's social, economic and structural transformation.

17. The Ministers, inter alia, committed to providing adequate funds for the data revolution, requested the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, the Economic Commission for Africa, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the relevant agencies of the United Nations to create a working group for the development of indicators for the first 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063 (2014-2023) and requested the African Union Commission, the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank to develop an index measuring the emerging-economy status of African countries, in line, inter alia, with the guidance in Agenda 2063 and the common African position on the post-2015 development agenda.

African Social Development Index (resolution 932 (XLVIII))

18. The Conference of Ministers welcomed the efforts made by the Economic Commission for Africa in developing the African Social Development Index and recommended that the Index become a standard reference point for assessing progress in social development on the continent. The Ministers urged all stakeholders, including development partners, academic institutions and civil society organizations, to support African Governments in rolling out the Index and in building national capacities to use the tool as a monitoring and policy instrument throughout the continent and requested the Economic Commission for Africa to report to the Conference of Ministers at its March 2016 session on the implementation of resolution 932 (XLVIII).

Framework for a renewed United Nations-African Union partnership on Africa's integration and development agenda for 2017-2027 (resolution 933 (XLVIII))

19. The Conference of Ministers, inter alia, commended all stakeholders on the efforts to implement the 10-year capacity-building programme for the African Union, welcomed the initiative to formulate the framework for a renewed United Nations-African Union partnership on Africa's integration and development agenda for 2017-2027 and endorsed the framework as the successor to the 10-year capacity-building programme for the African Union. The Ministers also requested the African Union Commission to submit the framework to the Assembly of the African Union

for consideration and adoption at its twenty-fifth ordinary session in South Africa in June 2015 and for its subsequent transmittal to the General Assembly at its seventieth session in September 2015, for consideration and adoption as the new United Nations programme of support for the African Union. The Conference of Ministers called upon the General Assembly, bilateral and multilateral partners and the international community at large to lend their full support to the implementation of the framework in tangible and enabling ways.

Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024 (resolution 934 (XLVIII))

20. The Conference of Ministers, inter alia, endorsed the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024 and requested the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa to mainstream the Vienna Programme of Action into the programme of work of the Commission, as appropriate and within its mandate, and to submit analytical reports on the implementation of the Programme of Action, as called for in its paragraph 75.

Least developed countries in Africa (resolution 935 (XLVIII))

21. The Conference of Ministers, inter alia, called for the adoption and full operationalization of specific least-developed-country deliverables, namely the technology bank and investment promotion regimes dedicated to the least developed countries, commended the Economic Commission for Africa, the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, the African Union Commission and other partner institutions on their commitment and technical expertise in taking forward the concerns and requests from African least developed countries and requested the Economic Commission for Africa, the Office of the High Representative, the African Union Commission and other partner institutions to continue to address the concerns and requests from African least developed countries, with a view to ensuring that those countries are able to satisfy the necessary graduation criteria.

22. The Conference of Ministers further requested the Economic Commission for Africa, in collaboration with the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, to hold the next biennial regional review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 during the tenth Joint Annual Meetings of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration and the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

Progress and further development of the African Risk Capacity Agency (resolution 936 (XLVIII))

23. The Conference of Ministers, inter alia, welcomed the progress report of the African Risk Capacity Agency on the establishment of its financial affiliate and on the drought insurance payments of $25 million, which it had triggered and transferred to States members of the African Union in the Sahel region ahead of other aid. The Ministers requested the secretariat of the Agency, under the mandate

set out in article 2 of the Agreement for the Establishment of the African Risk Capacity Agency, to help States members of the African Union to improve their capacities to plan and prepare for and respond to extreme weather events and natural disasters, as well as to develop an outbreak and epidemic insurance product to complement the efforts of the African Centre for Disease Control and Prevention.

B. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

24. The thirtieth session and the sixteenth extraordinary session of the Committee of the Whole of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean were held in held in New York on 19 and 20 March 2015 and in Santiago on 16 April 2015, respectively. The Committee approved a number of resolutions relating to the programme of work of the Commission, summaries of which are set out below for the attention of the Council.

Application of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (resolution 693 (PLEN.30))

25. The Committee took note of the "Santiago decision" contained in the report of the fourth meeting of the focal points appointed by the Governments of the signatory countries to the Declaration on the application of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development (resolution 694 (PLEN.30))

26. The Committee decided to convene an extraordinary session, to be held at the headquarters of the Commission in Santiago on 16 April 2015, in order to consider further a draft resolution on the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development and requested the secretariat to include with the letter convening the extraordinary session any information that might facilitate the consideration of the draft resolution.

27. The Committee decided to continue holding informal consultations with representatives of the member States of the Commission at United Nations Headquarters.

Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development (resolution 695 (PLEN.16-E))

28. The Committee decided to launch a regional consultation process aimed at establishing the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development at the thirty-sixth session of the Commission in 2016. The Committee also decided that the regional consultation process would define the mandate, structure, operational modalities and expected outcomes of the Forum, taking into account the outcome of the intergovernmental process on the post-2015 development agenda and in accordance with the priorities and mechanisms related to sustainable development established by the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States. The following issues related, inter alia, to the proposed regional forum, should be defined at the regional consultation process: modalities for the participation of other relevant stakeholders, relation of the Forum to other regional cooperation and coordination mechanisms and schemes related to the post-2015

development agenda, contribution to development and national capacity-building for the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda, including through South-South cooperation, measurement tools for the achievement of the post-2015 development agenda, including through regional indicators, and budgetary implications.

29. The Committee requested the Executive Secretary to issue by December 2015 a report with recommendations on the issues to be defined at the regional consultation process.

C. Economic Commission for Europe

30. The sixty-sixth session of the Economic Commission for Europe was held in Geneva from 14 to 16 April 2015. A summary of the action taken is set out below for the attention of the Council.

Endorsement of the high-level statement on the post-2015 development agenda and expected sustainable development goals in the Economic Commission for Europe region

31. The Commission decided to (a) endorse the high-level statement on the post-2015 development agenda and expected sustainable development goals in the Economic Commission for Europe region, (b) agree that the statement outlined some of the Commission's main achievements and activities, but did not attempt to cover all Commission activities or areas of work, nor did it replace agreed mandates, including the 2005 reform of the Commission or Commission decision A/65 on the outcome of the review of the 2005 reform, (c) underline that it should not be seen as a prejudgment of negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda and expected sustainable development goals and (d) transmit the statement as a regional input to the 2015 high-level political forum on sustainable development and the 2015 annual ministerial review of the Council.

Endorsement of the Geneva United Nations Charter on Sustainable Housing

32. The Commission decided to (a) endorse the Geneva United Nations Charter on Sustainable Housing as a non-legally binding document and (b) transmit the Charter as a regional input to the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) as requested in paragraph 6 of decision 24/14 of the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and as stipulated in paragraph 9 of General Assembly resolution 68/239.